



The Coolidge Times

A Letter from the Principal

By Amy B. Clouter

This weekend I had the opportunity to reflect again with gratitude about my career choices: I went car shopping-with children. In the process I gained a healthy appreciation for the benefits of my job, and the limit of my own skills. It was an interesting experience!

To begin with, there was the ride. Although I deal on a regular basis with transportation issues, it had been some time since we asked our on children to give up a Saturday to errands. I am grateful indeed to our bus drivers!

Then we arrived at the dealership. Somehow the promise of “a real life opportunity to apply math skills” wasn’t as compelling in reality as it seemed when we first decided not to seek a babysitter. Then there was the math itself: how do you explain ‘depreciation’ to a third grader? How do you convince a first grader that that the “new” car you are looking at *was* made last year? Needless to say, there were several failed attempts before I got to my good teaching. I have a renewed appreciation for the careful word choices, the analogies, and

the multiple, kid-friendly examples of math problems our teachers bring to their classrooms every day.

After a test drive (Picture me whispering, “Yes, we like the car, Lilly, but please don’t ask me about it so loudly.”) in which the girls experienced a persuasive text delivered aloud, we finally began our work in earnest. So did the girls. They knew to ask questions. They come with some stumpers:

Why aren’t there girls working here?

Why do you have a dog as your mascot?

How many kids can this car fit?

Are you going to stand up and walk away again or are we done now?

I was glad that most of these questions were directed at our salesman. This gave us the advantage of having more time for the mental math we needed. It was also nice to have an opportunity to laugh at what otherwise might have proven a stressful experience. Finally, I left grateful that in my work I can count on interesting questions every day. It’s a benefit I am especially glad to

experience on those stressful days.

Next year, I am looking forward to a whole new league of questions as we welcome kindergarten to Coolidge. I can only imagine the things our new students will ask about!

Winter is a great time for stories, for shared laughter, and for questions. While I don’t recommend a long ride or car shopping, I would encourage you to seek out opportunities to talk with your children even when you are in the midst of the mundane. You might end up with more than you bargained for, and chances are you’ll be glad of the gain.

Sincerely,

WANT MORE INFORMATION AND LESS PAPER?

Sign up for the weekly Coolidge listserv! Currently Coolidge has one of the lowest enrollments for listserv service, and yet we send messages home this way every week. Please click on the web to get your name on our list.

A Note From The Co-Presidents: ☺

Happy February! Well winter seems to have finally arrived, it sure is tough to go from 60 degrees to 5 degrees in a matter of days, but that's New England for you. February 5th brings our 100th day of school and not even a glimmer of a snow day – it might just be a nice long summer for the kids.

What has happened since our last letter? The 2nd graders had weatherman Matt Noye from NECN visit on January 30th and the pancake breakfast was very successful on Saturday, February 3rd. Thank you to Paul Harris and all of his volunteers for a terrific morning. Math night was a huge success on Wed. January 24th, thank you to Mrs. Clouter, Mrs. Stacey and all the staff volunteers who helped to make math so much fun for our kids.

Here's a list of upcoming dates to mark on your calendars. February vacation is from the 19th – 23rd, our spring fundraiser packet is coming home on Monday, Feb. 5th – we hope you'll take this

opportunity to help support the PTO. Movie night is scheduled for Thursday, March 15th, the movie title is to be determined and lastly, Friday, March 16th is a professional day, so there will be no school on that day.

On a final note, a lot of the members of this year's board will be moving on next year or just need a break from many years of service. If you are at all interested in taking a more active role in the PTO, please let us know as soon as possible. We are hoping to hold elections early this year so that there can be a transitional period.

Keep in touch,
Karen and Sue

Contact Information:

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IMPORTANT DATES:

- **Monday 2/5**
100th Day
- **Friday 2/9 & 2/16**
School Store is open!
- **Thursday 2/15**
PTO workshop on ADHD @ SHS 7-8:30 pm.
- **Friday 2/16**
Spring Fundraiser due
- **2/19-2/25**
Winter Break

**SPRING
FUNDRAISER
ON ITS WAY**

Your child should have brought home their spring fundraiser packet today. For clarification purposes, please note that any student who sells at least 5 items will be put into a drawing for an MP3 player. This drawing is being sponsored by the company, not by the PTO. For information or answer to questions on the fundraiser, contact Toni Alward or Heidi Ebers. Thanks.



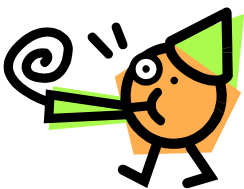
NURSE'S NOTE

The cold New England weather has finally arrived! The children will go out to recess every day as long as it is not raining and the temperature is above 20F (including wind chill factor). Please send your child to school dressed appropriately for outdoor play with a heavy coat, hat, gloves, and boots. Please feel free to call me (508-841-8887) if I can help with the purchase of any of these items for your child.

⚡ **Important deadline
AHEAD...**
Read all About It!

It's not too late to place your lollipop orders for 2/14. The orders are due by the 9th at the latest. The lollipops will be sent home in sealed envelopes through the backpack mail on Monday, Feb 12th. If there are any questions please email Katie Busick at: ktbusick@townisp.com

HEALTH BEAT



**WHAT'S HAPPENING
IN ELEMENTARY
HEALTH?**

By Mrs. Burgholzer

We just completed the Disease Prevention Unit in both second and fourth grade Health classes. This unit is timed during the winter months when we are all in such close contact with each other indoors. Please encourage the importance of hand washing to keep the students healthy and in school.

Grade 2 - The second grade students learned about viruses and bacteria in the story of Germs Make Me Sick, by Melvin Berger. Emphasis was made on the importance of hand washing especially before they eat and after they go to the bathroom. They also were introduced the Immune System. They realized that healthy foods, lots of rest and daily exercise contribute to the strength of their Immune System so they can fight off diseases and stay healthy.

Grade 4 - We started this unit with a lesson on personal hygiene and the importance of good hygiene habits. The students identified "hot spots" at home and at school where bacteria and viruses multiply and can live on surfaces for days. The importance of hand washing was reinforced to keep the students healthy. They also made the connection that if the bacteria and viruses multiply faster than the white blood cells in their Immune System, the end result will be they get sick! The students also learned about the body's defenses against germs in the story of the Body Battles, by Rita Golden Gelman.



BOOKS & BEYOND

The students have continued to make tremendous progress. In fact, for the first time I can say with certainty that almost every cCoolidge child is participating (We gained three new students just this week!) With fourth grade in the lead, almost every grade level has passed Station 2 (Australia) to reach Station 3 and even 4! Books to go with these stations have arrived and will soon be making their way to your child's classroom. *Please help your child record titles and minutes, as the latter makes the trains move.*

Thanks to Tricia O'Rawe, Mr. Drew Davis, Dr Rogers at Beal and assorted Coolidge friends, children will also have passports and souvenir boxes to store keepsakes from these virtual journeys. Stay tuned, and remember that reading and winter go very well together! If you have any questions about the program, please contact Kathy Taylor at 508.890.5854 or Kathleen_taylor@townisp.com

VALENTINE'S DAY GUIDELINES

The Native Americans call February the month of the "hunger moon". The Romans made amends in February, considering it a month of expiation. While we enjoyed our first real snow this weekend, Europe was being

slammed by winter weather. During these dark and cold days, I appreciate all the more that in America we work gestures of friendship into the mix. Here are some guidelines designed to ensure that everyone enjoys the holiday safely.

1. First of all, if children choose to bring valentines, they should come with one for all members of the class.

2. Valentines can be homemade, store-bought or something in between, but they should not come with candy attached.

3. Children may bring in a special snack for themselves on Valentine's Day, if they adhere to class allergy needs. We will not be sending home special bags, however.

4. Parents should not send in food items, but could provide nonfood treats, like pencils, etc. provided they send in a class set.

5. Crafts are part of the Fall and Snowflake Festivals, but not 2/14

6. Teachers may open valentines in class at their discretion, and when it suits their schedules.

I understand that some parents have questioned these decisions as being the result of having a new principal, and I understand that it's hard when guidelines change. I want to emphasize, however that these rules were designed with staff and PTO input to reflect past practice. Most importantly, I am charged

with making sure we adhere to the district Wellness Policy, and thus decisions about food in school are primarily influenced by this community effort. Please don't hesitate to contact me with questions, complaints, or concerns:

aclouter@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us

A NOTE OF THANKS...

to all the Coolidge family members who volunteered their time to help set up and pack up the Scholastic Book Fair last month and to those of you who worked the money table. Your help was really appreciated! We also owe a great, big thank you to the many parents who took time out of their busy day to help students write wish lists or find their books to purchase.

Coolidge Media Center is truly the winner with all our efforts. All the profits are going back into books for the media center. Students get very excited when Mrs. Fox displays the new arrivals and can't wait to check them out!

We couldn't have done it without you! Be on the look out for our spring fair in April!

Martha Paine, Media Specialist

Marge Fox, Media Aide

HELP WANTED

Volunteers needed for Homework Helpers: Homework Helpers is a before school help session for any student who needs extra guidance on homework, or reinforcement in certain skills. HH takes place in the Media

Center on Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 8:15-9:00am. If you are available to help out one or both mornings please contact Sue Harris at aldsue@townisp.com or 508-753-2156.

COOLIDGE CLIPS: AN

FYI From Deanna Fernacz Coolidge Clips - Worcester State College Choral of Dec 2006. Thursdays at 10am, 2pm & 5pm will be airing soon, starting Thursday Feb 1st. Our own chorus performance at All School meeting soon to follow!

Elementary Update
Wednesdays at 2:30pm
& 5pm, Thursdays at 7

**USE
GOODSEARCH.COM
AND SUPPORT
COOLIDGE...A CLICK IS
ALL IT TAKES AND THE
FUNDS GO TO SUPPORT
THE PTO.**